



The Cosmopolitan Girl

Rosalyn Drexler

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An outrageously funny novel daring to answer the question: Can the love affair between a young woman living the new lifestyle and a talking dog, survive in the world of an incomplete sexual revolution?

Madcap humor and mordant wit combine in **THE COSMOPOLITAN GIRL**, Rosalyn Drexler's newest novel featuring Pablo, anthropomorphic mutt, and his zany entanglement with one Helen Jones. Daughter of a psychic mother and an herbal healer father, Helen strikes out in search of identity and purpose in a world of unrelenting caricature. Eccentric lovers and hilarious misadventures abound as Helen struggles to take a lasting mate. Menage and menagerie are easily interchangeable in Rosalyn Drexler's irresistible entertainment.

The Cosmopolitan Girl Details

Date : Published March 28th 1975 by distributed in the U.S. by Lippincott (first published 1975)

ISBN : 9780871311696

Author : Rosalyn Drexler

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Nate D says

What is writing?

Imagine an ant colony carrying one by one a bit of food to their nest. The crumb of sustenance is bigger and heavier than any of the ants, yet they manage. They forage everywhere for their food; it is the instinct to survive. What others reject, they collect. Nothing is wasted.

So explains Rosalyn Drexler in the 89th of the 145 bits of sustenance that compose this novel. Is this how she works, casting about everywhere for little pieces of story which together will finally compose something, taking in cast-off narratives, all as a matter of survival? This is just before the narrator attempts to write a long article for *Cosmopolitan* about "family sex". Yet, there doesn't seem to be any actual incest here -- the especially unwanted plot point at the crux of the story is a relationship with a dog, though I can barely call it bestiality. Pablo is many things, among them yes simply a dog, though maybe a man, though maybe some kind of anthropomorph, or possibly a metaphor (though never so reducible as the blurb seems to suggest). Essentially, he's an irreconcilable swarm of fascinating meanings. The only way to deal with his character, really, is to take him as he's written, at complete face value. This is the story of his relationship with Helen, our narrator, as she deals with relationships, studies talk radio, attempts to understand her parents (while sponging off them), and seems to cast about for a kind of purpose that she might deny her life needed. Perhaps the aimlessness of those 145 bits of sustenance is her own. Certainly they spin off in some bizarre and abortive directions with a daring vivacious uncertainty.

This is the second Drexler I've read, simultaneously crazier and less crazy than *One or Another*. The actual events here are possibly crazier, but we seem to be being dared this time to read them as straight narrative truth, instead of the swarming fantasies and madneses of the previous. Readers of the astute manic absurd are invited to help in gathering the crumbs.

Aubrey says

Odd. Very odd. There's a definite purpose to the oddness, and every so often a glimmer of deeper meaning shines through, but still. This is a strange little book, and I will do my best to put my finger on just how so.

Now, I don't have that much experience with reading the *Cosmopolitan*, but it's pretty clear that the focus of this book is on the satirization on the pop pulp regularly churned through the publication. The money, the sex, the sorts of 'revolutions' that are in fact rather ridiculously useless when compared to the issues of deep oppression that are not only condoned, but in fact propagated by the atmosphere of fifteen seconds of fame. The more bigotedly outrageous and virulently hateful, the better. In fact, the only moments when the book touches upon reality is when one of its main characters, a Rush Limbaugh stand in who pushes the limits of the poisonous spewing vented forth on radio stations (Or not. It may actually be that bad.), has his moments in the spotlight. All of the other entries, whose total amounts to 145 and whose content spans from short clips of sentences to a couple of pages of so, is concerned with the sort of clichéd banalities one finds in horoscopes and the majority of serial magazines.

It is this use of banalities in context with the a wide range of pop culture events where the work shines.

These linguistic methodologies, so easily twisted and able to convey the weirdest of situations in the most misguided of terms that normalizes the strange and sensationalizes the usual, make for a variegated display of the sort of poor quality that provides most of the volume for today's articles. What marks the difference between the writing of this book and that of real publications is the author's intentional pushing of weird situations on the reader, weaving back and forth between the 'normal' and the 'grotesque' in a show of just how contrived these standards are when faced with the language of popular magazines. When one is far more accustomed to viciously spat out rants of extremely prejudiced radio hosts than harmless absurdities, one must ask how much meaning there really is in all this vacuous blathering floating around in both the written word and the air waves, and just what sort of message is being conveyed to the passively receptive public.

When it comes to the US, we laugh at the oddities of Cosmopolitan tips and take hate mongering as a matter of course. Says some concerning thing about the state of the culture, don't you think?
